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ABSTRACT

A study-in-progress is examining the multiple and fluid identities in one person's "been-being-becoming-imagining" as a facilitator in transformative drama--for example, as researcher, facilitator, participant, observer, audience. The inquiry is a recursive and spiraling process. The goals and procedure arise through the research undertaken in conversation with experiences remembered and reconsidered. Narratives of the researcher's life as facilitator read through different forms and voices help draw his attention to his practice. By exploring these his identity can begin to be seen in the flux and flow of a spiral--no static "I" is written about nor is one "experience" focused on. Theater plays with forms of text and languages. Writing about the process of coming to know an identity-in-process as a drama facilitator is an exploration of how the researcher is becoming what he is continually becoming. The processes of self discovery can only happen if both facilitator and participants are engaged in it. (Contains 15 references.) (NKA)

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by Warren Linds

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The Spiralling Journeys of
the Been-Being-Becoming-Imag(e)ining Drama Facilitator

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I find myself here....

in the middle of a journey

Research: from *recerchier* (French, 1080)...parcourir en cherchant (Rey, 1990, 1623): to travel through while searching.

My study examines the multiple and fluid identities in my been-being-becoming-imagining as a facilitator in transformative drama -- for example, as researcher,facilitator, participant, observer, audience. The inquiry is a recursive and spiralling process. The goals and procedures arise through the research I undertake in conversation with experiences remembered and reconsidered.

Smith (1997) says that people don't have "experiences" but they exist inseparably from them. Couture (1997) writes that experience is a structure built by the text(s) of our stances taken in the world, "moments of action weaving patterns of love or pain, fear or hate, sorrow or celebration into life's choreography" (Fels, 1995). Narratives of my life as facilitator read through different forms and voices help draw my attention to my practice. By exploring these we begin to see my identity in the flux and flow of a spiral: there is no static "I" written about nor one "experience" we focus on.

As a shape, a spiral is fluid allowing for infinite movement, backwards and forwards. high and deep. Spirals drift one into the other as a maze of interminglings emerges. The spiral is a useful idea in an inquiry process into theatre facilitation because, as in theatre,

> our mental processes and experiences are closer to a maze than a motorway, every turning yields another turning, not symmetrical, not obvious when we enter the maze (Winterson 1985, xiii).

Learnings too complex to grasp in a single occurrence spiral past me again and again. Partial understandings emerge from a visit to an "experience", allowing for later returns.

I play with forms of texts and languages, bringing together BodyMindSpirit through word, body, gesture, feeling and theory so we come face to face with kinaesthetic and discursive experience. Writing about this process of coming to know my identity-in-process as a drama facilitator is an exploration of how I am becoming what I am continually becoming, "making the way as I go."

Becoming is never imitating

(Deleuze and Guattari 1988, 305)

Subverting and questioning the unitary subject

....much as fragments in a fragmented life....

Going beyond data or representation

Not only am I playing with content,

a process of been-

being-

becoming

in drama facilitation,

A process that cannot,

should not,

be pinned down,

As butterflies in a display case (McNiff, 1999)

Rendering,

boiling down to its essence

dead

what is

living

I am also playing with form...and in doing both I am playing with the interplay between form and content ...

How many ways can one write on a page?

Interactivity Reflexivity

Shifting Sands

Struggling to pierce my own positioning,

teacher poet pedagogue artist academic performer?
(Jipson and Paley 1997, 12)

Journeying along the "Rackety Bridge" of Facilitation

As my research journey continues I am not only exploring my own evolving and multiple identit(ies) but also how they emerge from and contribute to dynamic and fluid relationships with others.

Peggy Phelan (1993) writes that the "attempt to walk (and live) on the rackety bridge between self and other," between the body and the mind, the physical and the psychic, the internal and the external, is where we discover real hope.

Pedagogy must involve training in the patient acceptance of the perpetual failure of in/sight....perhaps the best possibility for "understanding" difference lies in the "active" acceptance of the inevitability of misunderstanding (174).

Phelan speaks here not of misunderstanding as refusing to learn or move at all, but misunderstanding as continually attempting to walk and live in suspension, perhaps allowing that misunderstanding to continue to sit in (and an opportunity to explore) tension, between facilitator and participant and amongst the group. This "suspension in-between" requires a sense of trust in the relationships that continually emerge throughout working together.

Genuine relationships with others are important in facilitation because they are

> the mirror in which one can see onself as one is. And one cannot see oneself that way if one approaches it with a conclusion, an ideology, or with condemnation or justification. Relationship can help people to observe, listen, be attentive and alert and to understand one another (Rahnema, 1990, 218).

The processes of self discovery can only happen if both facilitator and participants are engaged in it. I am always in a process of been-being-becoming-imag(e)ining, a type of pedagogue (from Greek, *paedagogos*, one who accompanies children) (Smith, 1997, 272).

This has been / is becoming / will become intertwined with a process that has left my living experience of facilitating theatre open and continually unresolved,

Stumbling in ambiguity

(Grumet 1988, 470)

and, at the same time,

giving it a voice

(Jardine, 1992).

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